

DRAFT 11/15/07

**MEDICAL STANDARDS FOR OPERATIONAL MEMBERS
AND CANDIDATES OF THE
MONTGOMERY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

Issued by: County Executive
Policy No.

Authority: Montgomery County Code Section 21-2.(d)(4)

Supersedes: Medical Standards for Operational Members and Candidates of the
Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service 01-05AM

Effective Date:

Sec. 2. **Applicability.** Compliance with this policy is a requirement for all MCFRS operational career and volunteer firefighter/rescuer incumbents and for candidates applying for those positions. National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1582 Medical Standard evaluation is required for all firefighter/rescuer categories. The NFPA 1001 Medical Standard evaluation required in this policy will be used when applied to all incumbent volunteer emergency medical service (EMS) providers, and all candidates for those positions who do not meet the NFPA 1582 Standard.

Sec. 3. **Definitions.**

- a. **Candidate.** A person who has applied to perform the essential job tasks of a firefighter/rescuer or emergency medical service provider seeking employment or volunteer membership in the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service.
- b. **Emergency Medical Service Provider.** A Local Fire and Rescue Department (LFRD) member whose participation in emergency incidents is limited to providing EMS basic and advanced levels of patient medical care, and operating specific emergency vehicles.
- c. **Essential Job Task.** Any task or assigned duty that is critical to the successful performance of the job.
- d. **Fire Department.** For the purpose of this policy, and in the context of the NFPA 1582 and 1001 Standards, this term is interchangeable with Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service, the combined service comprising the Division of Fire and Rescue Operations (DFRO) and the Division of Volunteer Services (DVS), which includes the Local Fire and Rescue Departments (LFRDs).
- e. **Fire Department Physician.** For the purpose of this policy, and in the context of the NFPA 1582 and NFPA 1001 Standards, this term is interchangeable with Montgomery County's Fire-Rescue Occupational Medical Section (FROMS).
- f. **Medically Certified.** A determination made by the physician that the candidate or current member meets the medical requirements of the NFPA Standard that applies.

- g. **Medical Evaluation**. The analysis of information to make a determination of medical certification, a process that includes a candidate or member undergoing a medical examination.
- h. **Medical Examination**. An examination of an individual that is performed, or is directed, by the fire department (MCFRS) physician.
- i. **Member**. For the purpose of this policy, and in the context of the NFPA 1582 and NFPA 1001 Standards, a “member” refers to a career employee or a volunteer firefighter/rescuer or emergency medical services provider who is capable of performing the referenced essential job tasks during emergency operations at any rank within MCFRS.

Sec. 4. **Policy Statement.** It is the policy of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service to ensure the health and safety of MCFRS career and volunteer firefighters/rescuers and **emergency medical service providers** by making all reasonable efforts to reduce their risk of occupational injuries and illnesses. The purpose of this policy is to ensure each Integrated Emergency Command Structure (IECS) certified individual has successfully completed an annual physical performed at FROMS in order to continue to perform the essential tasks required in the firefighter/rescuer and EMS Provider positions in MCFRS.

- a. MCFRS operational career and volunteer firefighter/rescuer incumbents and candidates must successfully complete NFPA 1582 Medical Standards evaluation each year.
- b. LFRD volunteer incumbents and candidates in the **Emergency Medical Service Provider** category must successfully complete an annual physical. FROMS will perform the NFPA 1582 Medical Standard evaluation for all LFRD incumbents and candidates. If an individual does not meet the NFPA 1582 Medical Standard for firefighter/rescuer, the individual will be evaluated under the NFPA 1001 Medical Standard criteria for EMS Provider medical status.

Sec. 5. **Responsibilities.**

- a. **Candidates and Members** must:
 - 1. cooperate with, participate in, and comply with the **medical evaluation** process;
 - 2. provide complete and accurate information to the **fire department physician** or other authorized medical care provider(s);
 - 3. immediately report any occupational exposure, e.g., exposures to hazardous materials, toxic substances, infectious or contagious diseases, etc., to their supervisor(s); and

4. immediately report to the **fire department physician** any medical condition that could interfere with their ability to safely perform **essential job tasks**, e.g., illness or injury; use of prescription or non-prescription drugs; pregnancy, etc.
- b. The **Fire Department** (MCFRS) must:
1. provide **medical evaluations** and any additional medical tests ordered by the **fire department physician** at no cost to **members**, and provide only basic **medical evaluations** to **candidates**;
 2. provide the **fire department physician** with a fire service overview, current job descriptions, and **essential job tasks** required for all **fire department** positions and ranks;
 3. provide the **fire department physician** with MCFRS' organizational statement that is correlated to the medical requirements of NFPA Standards 1582 and 1001 which outlines the types and levels of services provided, and dictates for both **candidates** and **members** the **essential job tasks** they are expected to perform;
 4. help the **fire department physician** understand the physiological and psychological demands placed on MCFRS **members**, the environmental conditions under which they must perform, and the personal protective equipment they must wear during various types of emergency operations, in order to conduct appropriate **medical evaluations**;
 5. ensure that the **member** has timely access to appropriate medical treatment after an injury or illness resulting from the **member's** participation in MCFRS functions;
 6. ensure **member** privacy and confidentiality regarding medical conditions identified during the **medical evaluation**, except as required by law;
 7. where possible, provide alternate duty positions for **members** with temporary work restrictions, as recommended by the **fire department physician**; and
 8. include collection and maintenance of a confidential medical and health information system for MCFRS **members** in a comprehensive occupational medical program, with medical record keeping that complies with the requirements of 29 CFR 1910.120, "Access to Employee Exposure and Medical Records," and other applicable regulations, policies, and laws. These provisions apply to all health and medical records regarding an individual MCFRS **member**, and to all methods of communicating or transferring the information contained in these records, including written, oral, electronic, and any other means of communication.

c. The **Fire Department Physician** must:

1. understand the physiological, psychological, and environmental demands placed on firefighters/rescuers/**EMS providers**;
2. evaluate **candidates** and **members** to identify the medical conditions that could affect their ability to safely respond to emergency operations, using the **essential job task** descriptions provided by MCFRS;
3. identify and report the presence of any disqualifying medical condition(s) present in **candidates**;
4. inform the **fire department** chief or designee whether the **candidate** or **member** is **medically certified** to safely perform the **essential job tasks**, under the requirements of medical data confidentiality guidelines;
5. report the results of the **medical evaluation** to the **candidate** or **member**, including any medical condition identified during the **medical evaluation**, and provide recommendations on whether that individual is **medically certified** to safely perform the **essential job tasks**;
6. review and approve any **medical evaluations** conducted by a medical provider other than the **fire department physician**;
7. review individual **medical evaluations** and aggregate data from them to detect evidence of occupational exposures or clusters of occupational disease; and
8. provide medical supervision for fitness for duty, return to duty, rehabilitation, infection control, and physical conditioning programs.

Sec. 6. Appeals. If an applicant disagrees with the determination made by the Fire-Rescue Occupational Medical Section (FROMS), the applicant may, at his/her own expense, obtain a second opinion from a licensed medical professional. FROMS must review the second opinion. If, after reviewing the second opinion, FROMS does not rate the applicant as medically acceptable, the matter must be submitted to the Fire Chief for consideration. The Fire Chief must make a final determination of the applicant's acceptability, and the decision of the Fire Chief is final.

Sec. 6 **Implementation and Enforcement.** The Fire Chief is the implementation and enforcement authority for all policies and regulations of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service.

Sec. 7. **Severability.** If a court of final appeal holds that any part of this policy is invalid, that ruling does not affect the validity of other parts of this policy.

Sec. 8. **Effective Date.** This policy is effective on

Approved:

Thomas W. Carr, Jr., Chief
Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service

Date